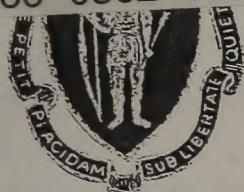
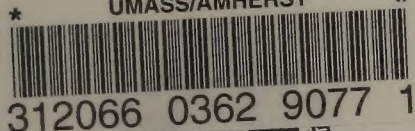


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Cable Television Commission

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Emergency Bulletin

Bulletin 96-4

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The storms of the past weekend have caused two problems for cable television subscribers in Massachusetts. First, many cable lines are down across the state, resulting in thousands of consumers without cable service. Second, in those communities without power, consumers are obviously unable to access cable service even if the cable operator's lines are not down.

This Bulletin is to remind consumers and cable operators of their rights and responsibilities under state law. Chapter 166A, Section 5(I) requires cable operators grant subscribers a pro rated credit for service outages greater than 24 hours. The Commission's rules also require that the credit be given regardless of whether or not the subscriber requests it, if the cable operator knew or should have known about the outage. Also, if an entire tier of cable service is out for 24 hours--but not the whole service--the operator still must grant the credit.

(more)

Cable subscribers should be aware that cable operators are working to restore service as soon as possible by replacing cable lines in all areas where lines are down. When that work is complete, cable subscribers whose power is on will have service restored immediately. In communities without power, however, the cable operators, like most other businesses, must wait for electrical service to be restored before they can resume providing service.

In the meantime, consumers who are without service because of the storm do not need to call their cable operator, since cable operators are aware of the outages, have extra crews working to restore service and need to keep their phone lines available to keep in contact with these crews. *Consumers should call their cable operator only if they have observed cable lines which have fallen down as a result of the storm.* IN NO CASE SHOULD A CONSUMER TOUCH A DOWN WIRE, AS IT MAY BE A LIVE ELECTRICAL WIRE OR CONNECTED TO LIVE POWER.

